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CRITICIZES OPERATION OF TIMBER INDUSTRY MECHANIZATION INSTITUTE

Scientific research and planning institutions have played a basic role in the USSR logging industry's technical progress. TsNIIME (Central Scientific Research Institute of Mechanization and Power Engineering in Logging) has been one of the leading institutions in this respect. It has been called on to solve vitally important problems of production organization and mechanization and has occupied itself with the creation of new, highly productive machines and equipment.

In recent years, the institute has given the industry the remarkable high-frequency TsNIIME-K5 saw and a number of pieces of equipment for sorting and loading wood at the lower landings; it has also developed the new, highly effective method of skidding timber in bole form.

But these accomplishments are less than could be expected of such a large institution as TsNIIME. The institute has not yet become a militant scientific headquarters for the technical re-equipment of the logging industry.

Every year, the state allots the institute vast funds to solve urgent problems in the industry. But the facts show that the expenditure of these funds does not result in a noticeable gain to the industry.

With the introduction of complex mechanization in logging, power supply in all phases of logging operations (felling, limbing, skidding to the upper landings, bucking, hauling to the lower landings) is tremendously important. Limbing is still being done manually. The ministry again included power supply problems in the 1951 plan of the institute; but after almost 10 months, it has not solved a single vitally urgent problem.

A central position in the institute is occupied by the Department of Power Engineering (Roos, chief), under which are the Steam Power, Electric Power Station, and Gas-Generator Laboratories.

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The Steam Power Laboratory (Shlykov, supervisor) has been in existence for about 3 years. During this time, the laboratory has not completed a single project of interest to the timber industry.

The laboratory occupied itself with testing the PPES-40 power plant for several years, passing up problems of greater importance to the industry. At present, the timber managements are experiencing a great electric power shortage in connection with the introduction of complex mechanization. Mobile plants are not adequate to assure steady and reliable operation of equipment at the lower landings. It seems that the laboratory should occupy itself with selecting equipment for the construction of economical power stations at the lower and upper landings. But, so far, it has done nothing.

The 1951 plan included the problem of developing a firebox for utilization of waste wood. During the first quarters of the year, nothing was done on this problem. Only very recently has the laboratory begun to work on it -- however, apparently not with the end result in view of designing one special firebox, which can be introduced in the industry, but of compiling an album showing fireboxes of various designs.

The situation is not any better in the Laboratory of Electric Power Stations (Greben', supervisor). For the last 2 years, it has extended no assistance to the industry.

More than 1½ years ago, designing was begun of a current converter, desperately needed by the logging enterprises. The technical design was completed. But creation of a working design and of an experimental model was put off. Supervisor Greben' persuaded himself that the laboratory was not in a position to create a model of the converter and transferred the task to the Central Designing Bureau. Having no electrical specialists, the Central Designing Bureau refused the job. Then the task was handed over to one of the plants. Thus, solution of the problem has been delayed for a long time.

Many funds were expended in designing and building five experimental models of high-frequency generators for PES-12-200 electric power plants. However this project was not carried through to the end.

In connection with the introduction of complex mechanization, the power supply problem loomed ominously before the industry. The laboratory workers, of course, knew about this. Nevertheless, experiments in the field of mobile and stationary power engineering began only after much delay. As a result, the institute is not now able to recommend a suitable and efficient power supply system which can be introduced in the industry.

Since the logging enterprises are receiving no scientific assistance, they are compelled to use mobile electric power plants at the lower landings although conditions call for stationary plants. This practice leads to very unproductive expenditure of funds. The need for stationary plants has been clearly pointed out at the institute's Krestetskiy Timber Management. For several years, more than ten mobile plants have been in use at its lower landing; they require a large number of service personnel, and the cost per kilowatt-hour of power is very high.

At present, experiments are being carried on only in mobile power engineering; nothing is being done about stationary plants.

Operations of the Gas-Generator Laboratory (Bobkov, supervisor) are somewhat better. There, the problem of using green wood in gas-generator equipment is being solved. The laboratory workers have achieved initial successes. A gas generator for PES-12-200 plants is now undergoing state tests.

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However, this project is still far from completion. The problem of replacing metal with ceramic fireboxes still awaits solution. Thus far, experiments in converting PES-60 plant engines to gas-generator fuel have not been positive. A technique of mechanical stoking has not been worked out. The laboratory has also passed up a very real problem, that of increasing the heat value of the gas.

There is no close liaison between the laboratories. So, it remains unclear which type of engine, steam, gas generator, or gas turbine, is to be used for stationary electric power stations. This situation may result in various types of equipment being retained for this purpose.

The Department of Mechanized Timber Felling (Uvarov, chief) is also failing to meet the loggers' requirements. For several years, it occupied itself only with slight refinements of the TONIME-K5 electric saw.

For the last 2 years, the department has been working mainly on the creation of a gasoline-engine-driven saw. This year, experimental models weighing 16 kilograms were produced. However, lighter saws already have been developed by other branches of industry. The department has deferred solution of another important problem, creation of a limbing device.

Frequently, funds are expended for designing new machines and creating experimental models; however, after these stages have been completed, the projects are dropped. For example, tens of thousands of rubles were spent for the designing of a lighter motor locomotive, but then for more than a year the project was laid aside. Considerable funds were expended for the designing and building of two experimental light steam locomotives, but during tests they were abandoned.

The institute is only superficially associated with production. The experience of timber industry Stakhanovites is not studied or generalized. The Department of Economics (Berezin, chief) is hardly concerned with production management, propaganda.

Lack of supervision by the Production Management Administration of the Ministry of Timber Industry USSR is a fundamental reason for the sluggishness of the institute.

An immediate change in the operation of the institute is vital for the future progress of the timber industry.

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